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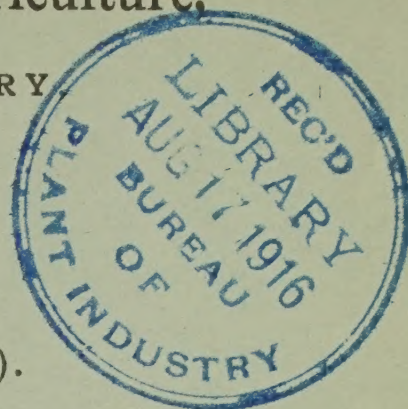
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BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

Forage-Crop Investigations,

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TEOSINTE (*Euchlaena mexicana*).

Teosinte is a coarse, annual grass native to Mexico, where it was cultivated in prehistoric times. It resembles corn rather closely, and some botanists consider that corn has been derived from teosinte in the course of long cultivation. The two plants may be hybridized without difficulty.

Teosinte grows from 8 to 12 feet high and commonly produces many stems from the same root. No variety of it has ever matured north of central Mississippi, but it is occasionally grown as far north as New Jersey and Minnesota. The first frosts of autumn promptly turn the leaves brown. For the best results teosinte requires fertile soil and a long season of moist warm weather.

Formerly teosinte was grown extensively in the Southern States. On soils of moderate fertility it does not yield as well as the sorghums, and in Florida and along the Gulf coast it can not compete with Japanese sugar cane for forage except on very rich soils.

Teosinte is best planted in hills 4 to 5 feet apart each way, which requires about 3 pounds of seed per acre; or it may be planted in rows 4 or 5 feet apart, using about 5 pounds of seed per acre. Its cultivation should be essentially the same as for corn.

The crop may be used for silage, for dry fodder, or for green feed. For the latter two purposes it may be cut several times during the season, as it promptly tillers from the stubble. For silage it is better to allow it to become nearly mature.

Under the most favorable conditions, teosinte gives extraordinary yields. Thus, the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station secured nearly 50 tons of green fodder per acre; the South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station reports 43,923 pounds, green weight, per acre from six cuttings, and the Georgia Experiment Station, 38,000 pounds per acre.

In spite of these large yields under favorable conditions, the culture of teosinte has diminished, so that it is now but little grown. Under ordinary conditions at least, corn, sorghum, and Japanese sugar cane are preferred.

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